

JUNE 30, 2019

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

THE HOLY APOSTLES

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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.

THE FREEDOM NOT TO SIN

Christ our God gave the Apostles divine grace so that they would perform His works with the same strength and authority of Christ Himself. In truth, the mission of the Twelve Disciples became the very mission of the Church as time passed. This mission includes the teaching of the Gospel, as well as the healing of souls and bodies, so that people can live the “life in Christ” and inherit life in the Eternal Kingdom. Indeed, this mission of the Church is summarized in the

Great Commission of our Lord, “Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” (St. Matthew 28:19).

Applying the teaching of the Holy Scriptures to our everyday way of life brings us emotional and spiritual health. The purpose of health, however, is to glorify Christ for the salvation of others. The commandment of our Lord to “baptize all nations” requires all of us to live the spiritual life of the Church on a daily basis in accordance

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CELEBRATING FREEDOM ON JULY 4th

Freedom is a matter of being able to make choices. Each of us has a choice that we can make every day: either to follow Christ, or to not follow Christ. If we choose to follow Christ, we are also choosing to “die to sin” in the face of St. Paul’s reminder in his Epistle to the Romans noting that the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23). The theologians of the *Orthodox Study Bible* add the following commentary: “If we choose to follow Christ, we are also choosing to ‘die to sin.’ To have died to sin does not mean our human nature has died. Rather, it means we are no longer held captive by it. We are to be immovable towards sin as something dead would be.” (pg. 1531). “

“Choosing to follow Christ means that we choose true freedom! While one is enslaved to sin, one does not know enough even to be ashamed of it. But, having received the Gospel, one realizes how shameful the life of sin is and can clearly see its end, which is death. Slavery to God, initiated by baptism, is actually freedom. Only this freedom can bear the fruit of holiness and everlasting life. Wages are something earned; thus death is earned by man through his sins. Eternal life is never earned, but is a gift. No human actions, now matter how good or noble they may seem, can earn eternal life, for it is only through the grace and love of God that life everlasting is given to us.” (pg. 1533).



Ο Χριστός έδωσε στους Αποστόλους την θείαν χάριν, έτσι ώστε να τελέσουν τα έργα του Θεού με τις ίδιες δυνάμεις και εξουσίες του Θεού μας Χριστού. Στην πραγματικότητα, η αποστολή των Δώδεκα Μαθητών έγινε με το πέρας του χρόνου η ίδια αποστολή της Εκκλησίας. Η αποστολή αυτή περιλαμβάνει το κήρυγμα του Ευαγγελίου με σκοπό της ψυχικής και σωματικής θεραπείας του ανθρώπου, προκειμένου να ζήσει την <έν Χριστώ> ζωήν και να κληρονομήσει την ζωήν της αιωνίου Βασιλείας. Μάλιστα, αυτή η αποστολή της Εκκλησίας συνοψίζεται με την εντολή του Κυρίου προς τους Μαθητάς Του: <Πορευθέντες, μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντας αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος.> (Ματθ. 28:19).

Η εφαρμογή στην καθημερινή μας ζωήν του Λόγου του Θεού όπως ευρίσκεται στην Αγίαν Γραφήν μας φέρνει συναισθηματική και πνευματική υγείαν. Ο σκοπός της υγείας, όμως, είναι να δοξάζουμε τον Χριστόν προς σωτηρίαν των συνανθρώπων μας. Η εντολή του Κυρίου να βαπτίζουμεν <πάντα τα ἔθνη> απαιτεί από όλους μας την καθημερινήν προσπάθειαν να ζήσουμε την πνευματικήν ζωήν της Εκκλησίας κατά τα παραδείγματα όλων των αγίων γενικώς. Διαφορετικά, το βάπτισμα παίρνει μόνον μιά απλή τελετουργικήν ποιότητα, παρά έναν τρόπον ζωής με νόημα, διά μέσου του οποίου η αγάπη του Χριστού εμπνέει όλους τους ανθρώπους γύρω μας.

Γιά να ασκήσουμε την πνευματικήν ζωήν των αγίων σημαίνει ότι θα απομακρυνθούμε από κοσμικές επιθυμίες και πειρασμούς.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

with the examples of the Saints in general. Otherwise, baptism takes on only a simple ceremonial quality, rather than a life with meaning through which the love of Christ our God inspires those around us.

In order to live the spiritual life of the Apostles and Saints, it is necessary for us to turn away from worldly desires and the temptations that they bring upon us and to join ourselves to Christ our God. As we prepare to celebrate American Independence this week on July 4th, we must keep in mind that we are actually -- and, in fact, -- *free* to practice the Tradition and teachings of our Orthodox Christian Faith. The gift of freedom is an opportunity to choose to behave in ways that express the love of God and neighbor. We should remember that we especially have the freedom *not to sin*.

However, we are becoming more aware that putting into practice the teachings of our Orthodox Church, is increasingly coming into conflict with the "ways of our world" and it is this same world that would be prone to consider us as "fools" and out of step with what is considered to be "normal" under the banner of freedom -- such as the touted "freedom of choice," or the implied notion of "freedom to be entitled" -- or even the "freedom to pursue happiness" -- (at all costs (?), or , despite whatever makes one "happy" (??)

Ironically, in the "land of the free" it is behavior that ignores God's loving Commandments that has made us prisoners in our own homes, going day to day with fears based on the "all-too-common" reports of shootings and abductions, as well as of crime on many levels. The love among people in our world has grown cold and, as a result, many stand in loneliness, unable to trust friends, or even family. The illusion that all of this is a "normal" way of life, is the result of the misguided understanding of the very purpose of freedom.

Time and again it has been shown that those who live by the Word of God -- those who try to live saintly lives, as did the Holy Apostles, -- are living with the purpose of sharing God's blessings with others and with "peace and goodwill among all," while those who simply "live free" are easily becoming the culprits of chaos. More so than in previous times in recent history, it is becoming all too clear that the last bastion of freedom -- our Free Will -- will be put to the test in order to make the choice as to whether we want to be "fools for Christ," as were the Apostles, or simply fools.

+FR. THEODORE

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: *Tou lithou sfraghisthendos (Tone 1)... ((The stone that had been sealed before Your tomb by the Judeans and the soldiers guarding watch over Your pure and sacred Body, O Savior, the third day You arose. And unto all the world did you give life whereby all the heavenly powers did proclaim that you are the Giver of Life. Glory unto our Resurrected Christ; glory unto Your Kingdom; glory to Your dispensation, O You alone Who loves all.))*

Hymn for the Holy Apostles : *Apostoli Aghi-ee presvevsasteh... (O holy Apostles, make intercession to our merciful God, that He grant our souls forgiveness of offenses.)*

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 to Christ our God that He will save our souls.)*

Kontakion Hymn for this Sunday : *Prostasia ton Christianon... (O Protection of Christians that never falls, intercession with the Creator that never fails, we sinners beg you, do not ignore the voices of our prayers. O good Lady, we implore you, quickly come unto our aid, when we cry out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who protect now and ever those who honor you.)*

READINGS: Epistle: First Corinthians 4: 9-16 / Gospel: St. Matthew 9: 36-38; 10: 1-8

Axion Estin is chanted/sung

Communion Hymn : *Eis pasan tin gheen exilthen o fthognos afton ke eis ta perata tis ecumenees ta rheemata afton. Alleluia. (Their proclamation went forth into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. Alleluia.)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Coffee Hour: Bernice Shaheen and Thalia Aeder

MEMORIAL - Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Life and Salvation for the servants of God: **George (Richard) Aeder (40 days)**, the beloved father of **Thalia Aeder** and **John Aeder**. Today's Memorial Service is also for the Eternal Life and Salvation for the servant of God, **Jack Shaheen (2 years)**, the beloved husband of **Bernice Shaheen** and father of **Michael Shaheen** (father-in-law of **Monika**); the father of **Michele Tasoff** (father-in-law of **Robert**), grandfather to **Camilla, Veronica, Julie and Lauren** and loving uncle to many nieces and nephews. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Rest to **George Aeder** and **Jack Shaheen** and may He grant peace and comfort to their families. **MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL!**

PHILOPTOCHOS - Coffee Hour hosts and hostesses are still needed for Sundays in August. See **Pat Dalkas** to sign up to host a coffee hour.

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, or call: (323) 397-5436.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tuesday, July 2nd.....No Bible Study.

Thursday, July 4th.....America Independence Day (office closed)

Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 4: 9-16

Brethren, God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the off-scouring of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 9:36-38; 10: 1-8

At that time, when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaios, and Thaddaios; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying, give without pay."

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 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.