

MARCH 10, 2019

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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

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THE LADDER

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY



Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4755
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.

OBSTACLES TO FORGIVENESS

Great Lent emphasizes the need that we have for forgiveness. Without forgiveness, it is impossible for us to be reborn spiritually. Unfortunately, however, we always find obstacles on the road to forgiveness. The first one is our *ego* -- and, from our ego, two other big obstacles present themselves: 1) the condemnation of our neighbor, and, 2) the personal indignation that we feel against him or her.

We should know the difference between condemnation of sin and condemnation of human beings. We con-

demn sinful deeds. But, we do not have the right to condemn people -- we have the responsibility before God to love our fellow human being. This responsibility is expressed through our prayers for his or her every good gift *and* our spiritual advice for his or her benefit. Without forgiveness, however, it is not possible for us to pray as we should and to offer proper advice.

The obstacles that our ego presents so as not to bring about forgiveness are found in our unjust assumptions and the temptation to be take

Continued on page 2

THE THEME FOR TODAY: "FORGIVENESS SUNDAY:"

Today we remember Adam and Eve's expulsion from Paradise as the result of their disobedience to God. Their disobedience was demonstrated by their unwillingness to discipline themselves in order to show their love for God. Our Archdiocese website gives more information pertaining to the meaning of today's dedication as "Forgiveness Sunday."

"The first commandment that God gave to [Adam and Eve] was that of fasting, which the first-fashioned received but did not keep; and not only did they not become gods, as they had imagined, but they lost even that blessed life which they had, and they fell into corruption and death, and transmitted these and innumerable other evils to all of mankind. The God-bearing Fathers set these things before us today, that by bringing to mind what we have fallen from, and what we have suffered because of the insatiety and disobedience of the first-fashioned, we might be diligent to return again to that ancient bliss and glory by means of fasting and obedience to all the divine commands.

Taking occasion from today's Gospel (Matt. 6:14-21) to begin the Fast unencumbered by enmity, we also ask forgiveness this day, first from God, then from one another and all creation." (www.goarch.org/)



Η Μ. Τεσσαρακοστή τονίζει την ανάγκη που έχουμε για συγχώρηση. Χωρίς συγχώρησις, δεν είναι δυνατόν να <ξαναγεννηθεί> ψυχικώς ο άνθρωπος. Αλλά, δυστυχώς, ευρίσκουμε πάντοτε εμπόδια επάνω στην οδόν προς την συγχώρησην. Το πρώτο εμπόδιον είναι ο εγωϊσμός – και από τον εγωϊσμόν παρουσιάζονται άλλα δύο μεγαλύτερα εμπόδια: 1) η κατάκρισις του συνανθρώπου μας, και, 2) η προσωπική περιφρόνησις που αισθανόμεθα εναντίον του συνανθρώπου μας.

Πρέπει να γνωρίσουμε την διαφοράν μεταξύ κατακρίσεως πράξεων και κατακρίσεως ανθρώπου. Καταδικάζουμε αμαρτολές πράξεις. Αλλά δεν έχουμε το δικαίωμα να καταδικάζουμε ανθρώπους. Έχουμε την ευθύνην ενώπιον του Θεού να αγαπούμεν τον συνάνθρωπόν μας – και αυτή η αγάπη εκφράζεται διά της προσευχής για το κάθε καλό του και της πνευματικής συμβουλής μας προς το συμφέρον του. Χωρίς συγχώρησιν, όμως, δεν είναι δυνατόν να προσευχόμεθα όπως πρέπει και να προσφέρουμε σωστές συμβουλές.

Τα εμπόδια που ο εγωϊσμός προσφέρει για να μην πραγματοποιηθεί η συγχώρησις του συνανθρώπου μας ευρίσκονται στις άδικες προϋποθέσεις μας και στον πειρασμόν να νιώθουμε προσωπική προσβολήν. Αυτά τα εμπόδια εξαφανίζονται διά μέσων της αγάπης μας για τον Κύριον και της προσευχής μας για τον συνάνθρωπόν μας. Η αγάπη για τον Κύριον και η προσευχή συνδέονται με την αρετήν της ταπεινοφροσύνης.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

things personally. These obstacles vanish through love for our Lord and our prayers for those around us. Prayer and love for our Lord go together with the virtue of humility.

The problem with making assumptions without acquiring the facts about an incident or a situation is that we jump to inaccurate conclusions. As a result, we find ourselves saying and doing things that are unfair and untruthful. This is what it means to commit a sin. Hence, when we speak about repenting from sins, we mean that we must change our way of thinking -- 1) to not make assumptions and, 2) therefore, to avoid saying or doing things that are more harmful than helpful. Assumptions are almost always based on our perceptions of reality than on reality itself. As a result, perceptions are very often deceptions, as we have noted many times previously.

We also fall into the error of thinking that whatever someone says or does is the expression of personal angst against us. Therefore, we are tempted to “take things personally.” Most often, however, someone’s mood has nothing to do specifically with us. If someone is “cranky” with us, odds are he or she is just plain “cranky” with everyone, either as a result of some bad news or maybe a health-related concern. It is not fair to them to assume that they are cranky with us on a personal basis, when, in fact, they are anxious about matters that are most likely far more serious than whether or not we personally “have a good day.” However, if “fence-mending” needs to be done, in humility, each person must do his or her part in resolving issues and finding between them love for one another and peace in Christ.

Finally, it is vital that we remember that judgment is solely up to Christ our God. On this point, let us never forget that our Savior made it abundantly clear about the standard of His judgment over us personally: “If you do not forgive sins of others, neither will Your Heavenly Father forgive you.” This fact is borne out by the physical make-up of our flesh and bones. Many studies have indicated that forgiving other people is actually physically and mentally healthy.* This fact, among others, confirms that the Commandments of our Lord are consistent with the actual chemistry used by God to create us.

Let us, therefore, remove all obstacles that hold us back from forgiving one another and let us begin Great Lent with prayer for and with each other, as well as thanksgiving to Christ our God and Savior.

+FR. THEODORE

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*See: *Medical Daily*, January 7 2015, “How Forgiveness Benefits Your Health: Forgiving Wrongdoers Can Expand Physical Fitness,” by Lecia Bushak, (www.medicaldaily.com)

HYMNS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

ANTIPHON I:

Verse 1: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and everything within me, bless His holy name."

Response: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."

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

Response: "By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, O save us."

Verse 3: "The Lord prepared His throne in heaven, and His Kingdom rules over all."

Response: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."

Chanter(s): "Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen".

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

ANTIPHON II:

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."

Response: "Soston imas Ie Theou, o Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si: Allilouia."

Verse 2: "Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob; his hope is in the Lord his God."

Response: 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."

Response: "Soston imas Ie Theou, o Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si: Allilouia."

Chanter(s): "Doxa Patri ke Io, ke Ayio Pnevmati, ke nin ke ai ke is 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 made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.*

Resurrection Hymn: *Ex ipsous katilthes [Tone 8]... (O merciful One you came from on high and condescended to Your three-day burial. You came to save us from suffering. You are our life and our Resurrection. Glory 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 for this Sunday: *Tis sophias odhigeh, froniseos chorighah...(O guide to wisdom, provider of prudence, disciplinarian of fools, and defender of the poor, fortify and discipline my heart, O Master; You, give me a word, O Word of the Father. For behold, I will not hinder my lips from crying to You: O merciful Lord, have mercy on me who have fallen.)*

READINGS: EPISTLE – 1 Corinthians - Romans 13: 11-14; 14: 1-4 / GOSPEL -- St. Matthew 6: 14-21

Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos): Axion Estin... (Divine Liturgy Book, Pg. 51)

Communion Hymn: Enite ton Kyrion (Divine Liturgy Book, pg. 64)

"Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. "

--Romans 13: 12



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour: Annette Laskaris

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Spiro Canakis, celebrating their 55 year Wedding Anniversary today!

PHILOPTOCHOS-Thank you to those who renewed their memberships, becoming new members at the Membership Luncheon yesterday, March 9th. On **March 22nd and on March 23rd**: we will start our new outreach project: packets filled with a meal or toiletries. Come and help pack. Mark your calendars for the **Easter Bake Sale**. During the **week of April 8th** we will be baking bread and cookies. We will be **selling on Sunday, April 14th and 21st**.

STEWARDSHIP- Please check out the enclosed list of those who have returned their **2019 Stewardship Cards** and let us know if any correction is to be made. Apologies for omitting any name in the past.

AHEPA - Please note: The AHEPA Meeting originally scheduled for last week has been re-scheduled for this week: Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL - On **Saturday, March 23rd**, our Sunday School students together with their parents will be **visiting the Shield's Date Garden** display in Indio, showing the life and ministry of our **Savior Jesus Christ**. We ask the parents of the students to accompany them for this outing. It will provide parents with topics for home discussion throughout this Lenten season.

ST.GEORGE PARISH LENTEN SYMPOSIUM - April 6, 2019. See enclosed flier.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, March 11th.....FIRST DAY OF GREAT AND HOLY LENT
Compline Service-6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 12th.....Bible Study - 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 13th.....Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy- 6:00 p.m.
AHEPA Meeting-6:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 14th.....Choir Practice-1:00 p.m.
Parish Council - 2:30 p.m.

Friday, March 15th.....Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy- 9:00 a.m.
Salutations to the Virgin Mary- 1st Stanza-7:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 16th.....SATURDAY OF SOULS
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Next Sunday - March 17th... ..SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY
Orthros-8:00 a.m. / Procession with Icons-9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy of St. Basil-9:30 a.m.

CORRECTION: Note that the Feast Day of the Annunciation to the Ever-Virgin Mary on March 25th was not included in the March 2019 parish calendar. Please correct this error and note:

Monday, March 25th.....ANNUNCIATION TO THE EVER-VIRGIN MARY
Orthros-8:30 a.m./ Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

The Ladder for March 2019 is lovingly sponsored by: Emily Tcharos
In memory of her beloved husband, George Tcharos

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.

ST. GEORGE
LENTEN PARISH SYMPOSIUM:

LIFE AFTER DEATH: "INQUIRE WITHIN"

SYMPOSIUM INCLUDING TOPICS RELATED TO
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL LIFE & DISCIPLINE:

-THE NATURE & PRACTICE OF SACRAMENTAL LIFE IN
EVERYDAY LIVING-

SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2019

AT:

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX
CHURCH PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA

10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

PROGRAM:

10:00 A.M. - WELCOME AND MORNING PRAYER

10:30 - 11:30 - SPEAKERS: DEACON EUTHYM KONTAXIS, (ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, PALM DESERT), FR. DAVID KRUSE (ST. RAPHAEL ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, THOUSAND PALMS) & FR. ANDREW LESKO (ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, TEMECULA)

11:30 - SUMMARY AND REFLECTION

12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M. - LUNCH

1:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. - SYMPOSIUM (QUESTIONS & ANSWERS)

3:30 P.M. - 4:00 P.M. - VESPERS

VESPERS FOR FORGIVENESS SUNDAY

There is no reading from the Psalter.

Chanter/Choir: Lord, I have cried unto You, hear me. Hear me, O Lord. O Lord I cry out to You, hear me when I call out unto You. To You is due praise./ Receive my prayer as incense before You; I stretch out my hands to You as an evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord. *(The Deacon censens the icons and the faithful).*

From the depths I cry out to You, O Lord; Lord, hear the sound of my voice.

Let us make haste to humble the flesh by abstinence, as we set out upon the God-given course of the holy Fast; and with prayers and tears, let us seek our Lord and Savior. Laying aside all memories of evil, let us cry out and say: we have sinned against You, O Christ our King. Save us as the people of Nineveh in the days of old and in Your compassion make us partakers of Your Heavenly Kingdom.

If You should mark iniquities, O Lord, Lord, who would be able to be justified? Only from You is found mercy. When I think of my works, deserving every punishment, I despair of myself, O Lord. Behold, I have despised Your precious Commandments and wasted my life as did the Prodigal. Therefore, I entreat You: cleanse me through the waters of repentance and, through prayer and fasting, make me shine with light. For, You alone are merciful. Do not reject me, O Benefactor of all, Who is supreme in love.

Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Let us set out with joy upon the season of the Fast, and prepare ourselves for spiritual warfare. Let us purify our souls and cleanse our flesh. As we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion. Rejoicing in virtues of the Holy Spirit, may we persevere with love, and so be counted as worthy to behold the solemn Passion of Christ our God. And with great spiritual gladness, may we behold His Holy Passover.

(The Priest, Deacon and Altar Boys gather at the solea in front of the Royal Gates with the censer and candles)

Deacon: Wisdom. Arise!

Clergy and Chanters: O gladsome light of the Holy Glory of the Immortal Father, the heavenly, Holy, blessed Jesus Christ! Having come to the setting of the sun and having seen the evening light, we praise God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is proper that at all times we sing a song of praise in measured melody, O Son of God, Giver of Life. Behold, the universe sings to Your glory.

Deacon: The evening Prokeimenon.

Chanters: Turn not away Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul and deliver me.

-Let Your salvation, O God, be a source of help for me.

Turn not away Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul and deliver me.

-Let the poor see it and be glad.

Turn not away Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul and deliver me.

All the Faithful Together: Lord grant that we may be kept this evening without sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers. Praised and glorified is Your Name forever. Amen.

Let Your mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we set our hope on You. Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your Commandments. Blessed are You, O Master, let me understand Your Commandments. Blessed are You, O Holy One, enlighten me according to Your Commandments. Lord, Your mercy endures forever; do not reject the work of Your hands. Praise is due unto You; worship befits You; glory is owed to You: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Deacon:

- Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord...
- Help us; save us; have mercy upon us and protect us by Your grace....
- *(The remaining completion Litanies are exclaimed by the Deacon.)*

Priest: For You are a good and loving God and to You we give glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Priest: Lord our God, You inclined the heavens and descended for the salvation of all people. Look upon Your servants and Your inheritance. They have bowed down before You the awesome, yet compassionate Judge, not looking for human help, but awaiting Your mercy and in anticipation of Your redemption. Preserve them at all times; during this whole day and evening, as well as throughout the impending night and protect them from every enemy; from all adverse powers; from vain imaginations and from evil thoughts.

May the might of Your Kingdom be blessed and glorified of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Chanters:

Your grace has shone forth, O Lord, it has shone forth and given light to our souls. Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the season for repentance. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, that having sailed across the great sea of the Fast, we may reach the Third-Day Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

The ranks of angels glorify You, O Mother of God, for You have given birth to Him Who is God and Who dwells with the Father and the Holy Spirit, Who created the angelic hosts out of nothing by an act of His Will. Pray to Him, All-Pure Lady, to save and illumine the souls of those who with true worship sing Your praises.

Priest: Now, O Lord, let Your servant depart in peace according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all people: a light to enlighten the Gentiles and glory for Your people, Israel.

All the Faithful: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

(3) Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of the ages.

All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, be gracious to us in our sins. Master, forgive our transgressions. Holy One, consider our weaknesses and heal them, for Your Name's sake. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Priest: For Yours is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Chanters:

-Hail, Theotokos, Virgin, Mary full of grace, the Lord is with You. Blessed are You among women and blessed is the fruit of Your womb: for You have given birth to the Savior of our souls.

Glory...

-O Baptist of Christ, be mindful of us all, that we may be delivered from our iniquities: for unto you is given grace to pray for us.

Now and forever...

-Pray for us, O Holy Apostles and all Saints, that we may be delivered from peril and afflictions: for you are fervent advocates before the Savior.

-Beneath Your tender mercy we take refuge, O Theotokos: despise not our prayers in times of distress, but deliver us from peril, for You alone are Pure and alone You are blessed.

Priest: THE DISMISAL PRAYERS

The priest then asks the faithful to venerate the icons and to exchange one-by-one to each other the "kiss of peace", saying, "Forgive me."

2019 Stewardship Pledge Cards Received List
as of February 28, 2019

Astmos, Spiro
Attalia, Phillip "Ted"
Barringer, Bill
Barringer, Louise Dobbs
Boukidis, Ann Michas
Bozigian, Linda
Breighner, Nancy
Canakis, Spiro & Eva
Carkonen, Paul & Paulette
Castrale, Craig & Eleni
Chiotis, Antony & Penny
Daglas, Alice
Dalkas, Anthony & Patricia
Delegans, Chris
Demetropoulos, Nicholas
Desjoyners, Josie
Dixson, Richard & Ann
Dunkel, Mariya
Dymond, Donald & Alexandra
Elmo, Doris
Fakinos, Frank & Joan
Fick, Rod & Olympia Pilafidis
Gallade, Adele & Hoffman, Ken
Halkidic, Anastasios & Penelope
Haveles, John
Hector, Tim & Nadia
Heinrich, Bess
Kallis, Linda
Karalis, Bill & Bessy
Karas, Demos & Evelyn
Kontaxis, Nicholas
Kontaxis, Dr. Euthym & Krisann
Krespis, Nick & Fontini
Kripner, Robert & Eva
Kundanis, Christine
Laskaris, Chris & Annette
Latkovic, Nicholas & Rhonda
Latkovic, Pauline
Lee, Bill & Mary
Lehman, Gloria
Lekas, Bill & Denise
Lewis, Annette
Lyons, Doug & Carol

Makrianis, Julie
Maletis, Chris & Kristi
Mallen, Greg & Andi
Manesis, Dr. John & Bess
Mantes, E.G. & Mary Ann
Meek, Eve
McEvoy, Peter & Stephanie
Panopoulos, Chris & Joan
Pantels, Fr. Theodore & Petula
Petalas, John & Linda
Piggott, Bill & Mary
Platis, Harry PLLC
Pousen, Deb
Prineas, Anna
Psaltis, Harry
Pulos, Alice
Rassi, Abraham
Richards, Tasia
Sahpazis, Georgia
Sarikas, Kiriakos & Delores
Snarskis, Peter & Athena
Spanos, George & Angie
Speliopoulos, Nick & Carol
Steele, Dr. Stephen & Lynane
Storton, Wynn & Ana
Tatomir, John & Mary
Valissarakos, Lula
Vawter, Mike & Debbie
Veroulis, Angelo & Tina
Young, Diane
Zacharidou, Mary
Zambrano, Nelly
Zaverdas, Pam & Larry
Zhupa, Vranela