

MARCH 24, 2019

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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

Website: www.go-stgeorge.org

Email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com



THE LADDER

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

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.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Today's Gospel tells us about the Person of Christ and about the nature of God's Grace: 1) Christ is the True God, and, 2) God's Grace is uncreated energy. Our Lord said to the paralytic that his sins were forgiven. With this, the scribes asked, "Who is able to forgive sins, but God only?" (St. Mark 2: 10). Thus, Christ cured the paralytic and showed that He is Himself God.

The healing of the paralytic revealed, as a result, the Divine Grace of Christ. His healing energies are uncreated powers of His Divine nature. The uncreated

Grace of God is known as the Divine Light, which revealed the Divine nature of Christ when Christ was transfigured on Mt. Tabor. According to St. Gregory Palamas, "The energies of God can be called light...In that God reveals Himself and makes Himself known through His energies...He is Light, which pertains to the Age when we will see God face to face." (*The Vision of God*, by Vladimir Lossky, pg. 130).

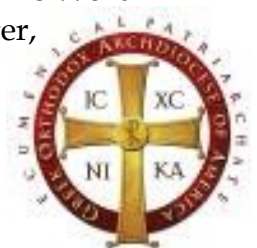
According to our Orthodox Christian Tradition, through prayer we can acquire the uncreated energies
continued on page 2

THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

Tomorrow is the Feast of the Annunciation. This Feast has its roots in the biblical passage in Saint Luke's Gospel, wherein the evangelist narrates that incredibly refined dialogue between the angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-38). The angel Gabriel will "announce" the joyful news of the impending birth of the Messiah; hence, our English name of "Annunciation" for the feast. However, the Greek title of *Evangelismos* is even richer, in that it captures the truth that the Gospel - *evangelion* - is being "announced" in the encounter between God's messenger and the young maiden destined to be the Mother of God. Her "overshadowing" by the Holy Spirit is "Good News" for her and for the entire world!

It is the Word's conception in the womb of the Virgin Mary that is the "moment" of the Word's "enfleshment." Hence, the Church's insistence that a new human being begins to exist at the moment of conception. "The Word made flesh" - our Lord Jesus Christ - will be born nine months later, according to our liturgical calendar; but again, His very conception is the beginning of His human life as God-made-man.

--Taken from: *Orthodox Church in America: www.oca.org/reflections*
fr.-steven-kostoff



Το σημερινό Ευαγγέλιο μας λέει για το Πρόσωπο του Χριστού και για την φύσιν της Θείας Χάριτος του Θεού: 1) ο Χριστός είναι ο Αληθινός Θεός, και, 2) η Χάρις του Θεού είναι άκτιστη. Ο Κύριος είπε στον παραλυτικόν ότι οι αμαρτίες του είχαν συγχωρηθεί. Με αυτό, οι γραμματείες ερώτησαν, <Τίς δύναται ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας εἰ μή εἰς ὁ Θεός;> Ἐτσι ο Χριστός εθεράπευσε τον παραλυτικόν και ἔδειξε ὅτι εἶναι ὁ Ἴδιος ὁ Θεός.

Ἡ θεραπεία του παραλυτικού προέκυψε ὡς ἀποτέλεσμα της Θείας Χάριτος του Χριστού. Ἡ θεραπευτικὴ Του ἐνέργεια εἶναι ἡ ἀκτιστὴ δύναμις της Θεϊκῆς φύσεώς Του. Ἡ ἀκτιστὴ Χάρις του Θεού εἶναι γνωστὴ ἐπίσης ὡς τὸ Θεϊκό Φῶς που ἀποκάλυψε τὴν Θεότητα του Χριστού ὅταν ὁ Χριστός ἐμετεμορφώθηκε στο Ὄρος Θαβώρ. Κατὰ τον Ἁγ. Γρηγόριον, <Οἱ ἐνεργεῖες του Θεοῦ μποροῦν νὰ ὀνομάζονται φῶς... Ὅσο ὁ Θεός ἐκδηλώνει τὸν ἑαυτὸν Του καὶ καθίσταται γνωστός στις ἐνεργεῖες Του... εἶναι Φῶς. Τὸ τέλειο ὄραμα της Θεότητος που γίνεται ἀντίληπτο ὡς ἀκτιστο φῶς... Ἀφορὰ τὴν ἐποχὴν ὅπου θὰ δούμεν τὸν Θεὸν πρόσωπο με πρόσωπο.> (Τὸ Ὁραμα τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὑπὸ Vladimir Lossky, σελ 130.)

Ἡ <ἐν Χριστῷ ζωὴ> εἶναι εἶδος ζωῆς του ἀνθρώπου που εἶναι ἠνωμένη με τὸν Χριστὸν διὰ της Θείας Χάριτος. Δηλαδή, διὰ μέσου της Ὁρθοδόξου πνευματικῆς ζωῆς, συμμετέχουμεν στις ἴδιες δυνάμεις του Θεοῦ. Αὐτές οἱ δυνάμεις ἐνεργοῦν μέσα στην ψυχὴν του ἀνθρώπου μέχρι που ἀποκτὰ τὴν θεοποίησιν.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

of God. These energies work in our souls so that we can acquire deification (i.e., being like God in His energies, but, of course, not in His essence). Not at all the same thing as today's "mindfulness," sincere, genuine prayer differs, because the Person of Jesus Christ is present in our minds and souls.

Both last Sunday and today are related to the Orthodox Christian Tradition regarding the value of prayer. As the Holy Icons are vehicles for prayer, sincere prayer itself is the means to actually participate in God's energies and, therefore, become Godly in both our expressions of Divine love and the performance of Divine deeds. It was St. Gregory Palamas, whom we commemorate today, who explained the power of prayer in terms of participation in the uncreated energies of the One God as the Holy Trinity.

We are reminded that prayer and worship involve an interwoven two-fold relationship with Christ God. In the first place, prayer calls down the uncreated, divine power of our Lord to provide the *opportunities* for our salvation. These opportunities (or blessings) strengthen our relationship with our Lord in the sense of allowing us to be thankful to God and joyful in all of our relationships. A common petition in the liturgical life of the Church is this: "For our deliverance from all danger, wrath and necessity, let us pray to the Lord." We pray for God's protection from harm and danger that comes from the world outside of us. At the same time, we pray for "things that are good and beneficial for our souls and for peace in the world," again through the descent of the grace of the Holy Spirit. The collective prayer in the context of worship brings about the descent of the Holy Spirit in the celebration of the Sacraments — for which we are always thankful.

Secondly, we understand that prayer is a sincere relationship with God. As much as God sends down His Grace upon us, prayer is our effort to ascend to God by doing His Will, asking that God accept our prayer making our words and actions useful to His glory. The notion that "people of prayer" are interested in only their own salvation, in the sense of "self-interest," is countered by the fact that, when people are truly good people (with the understanding that only God is Good), their words and deeds are genuinely good for all people in society. The Saints offered prayers in the desire to unite themselves with God's energies so that the people around them could be saved. The result was that wonderful miracles for the salvation of others and to God's glory came about with the *same Divine energy* by which Christ healed the paralytic (of today's Gospel) and others.

Great Lent is a season of prayer and worship which affects our everyday way of life to the core. Through prayer, our motives, attitudes, outlooks, words, deeds and even our moods communicate *from within us* the Divine, uncreated energy of God's love to our world.

+FR. THEODORE

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: *Ote katilthes pros ton thanaton [Tone 2]... (When You descended to the realm of death, You, as Life Immortal, rendered to Hades a mortal blow by Your all-radiant divinity. And when You, from the inner depths and the darkness below did raise the dead, all the hosts of heavens did proclaim and cry out: O Life-giving Christ and our God we give glory.)*

Hymn for the Eve of the Annunciation: *Simeron tis pankosmiou charas ta proimnia... (Today is the prelude of the joy of the universe, and it incites us to sing the forefestal hymns. For behold, Gabriel is coming, and he will say to the Virgin: Rejoice, Maiden full of grace; the Lord is with you.)*

Hymn for St. Gregory Palamas: *Orthodoxias o Fostir... (Beacon of Orthodox belief, the strong support of the Church and her teacher inspired by God, you are the ornament of monks, the unassailable champion of theologians, O Gregory the Wonder-worker and the boast of Thessalonica, the messenger of grace. Forever earnestly entreat for the salvation of our souls.)*

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: *Epelefsee Pnevματος tou Panaghiou... (The Archangel spoke to you, O Theotokos, and the Holy Spirit came on you and thus you did conceive the Father's Son, who is one in throne and one in essence. Through you, thus, was Adam recalled.)*

READINGS: Epistle - Hebrews - 1: 10-14; 2: 1-3 / Gospel - St. Mark 2: 1-12

The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (pgs. 125-143 in our Divine Liturgy Book)

Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos): Epi Si Cherhee ke Charitomeni... (Divine Liturgy Book, Pg. 135)

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



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour: Mary Ellen Katsotakis

PHILOPTOCHOS-Today, we are selling Diplas. They are freshly made and sell for **\$8.00 for a large box** and **\$3.00 for a small box**. Pick them up while they last. We started our Membership month with our Membership Luncheon on March 9. Dues are \$45.00. Make your check payable to Philoptochos with "membership" on the memo line. Send your check to the office or give it to Tina Veroulis. **Take the Lenten Challenge for St. Nicholas Church and National Shrine. The challenge is \$20.00 in 20 days of Lent and the deadline is April 1.** (See the "20-20" enclosed Philoptochos flier.) All parishioners are invited to support the Metropolis Challenge. Make your \$20.00 check payable to Philoptochos with " St. Nicholas Shrine" on the memo line. We will send one check to the Metropolis with a list of all our donors.

AHEPA SCHOLARSHIP - Applications for the **Fr. T. P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship** are now available in our parish hall. The **deadline for receiving these applications is May 1st** and the scholarship will be **awarded on AHEPA Sunday, May 18**. Applications are also available online at: www.ahepa528.org, along with more information.

SPRING GENERAL ASSEMBLY - Next Sunday, March 31, 2019. Participation is open to all who have turned in their **2019 Stewardship Pledge Card** and who have begun making contributions toward their Pledge.

COFFEE HOUR – Please do not throw away the new plates that are being used for our coffee hour. Place them at the coffee bar near the kitchen entrance. Many thanks for your cooperation.

STEWARDSHIP – Please note the updated 2019 Parish Stewardship List that is enclosed. Everyone is reminded that those who have not yet turned in a Pledge Card must do so prior to the upcoming General Assembly Meeting next Sunday in order to be able to participate and vote.

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

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Tonight.....Great Vespers - 5:00 p.m.
- Monday, March 25th.....ANNUNCIATION TO THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, March 26th.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, March 27th.....Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy- 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday, March 28th.....Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.
- Friday, March 29th.....Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy - 9:00 a.m.
Salutation Service (3rd Stanza) - 6:00 p.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)

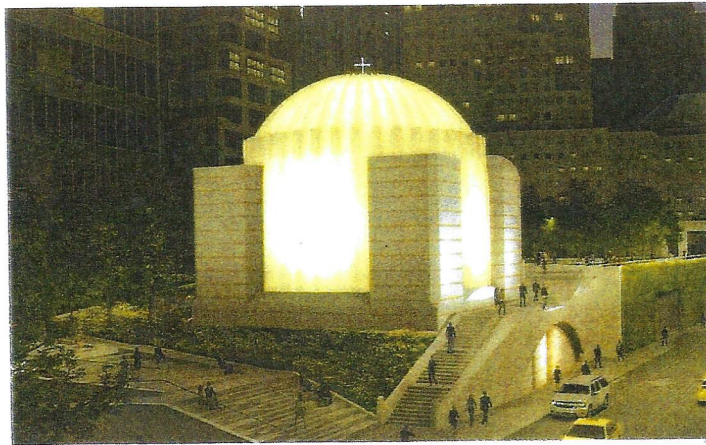
11:30 - SUMMARY AND REFLECTION

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

\$20 Completes our Pledge!



\$20 for 20 Days Saint Nicholas Church and National Shrine Lenten Challenge!

Help Fulfill Philoptochos Pledge Honors 9-11 victims and Helps Complete What Should Be “The Most Visited Church in the United States”

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Blessed Lent!

“The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.”

John 1:5

As we are now into this holy time of reflection, and penance, and prayer, we are reminded that **almsgiving is an important part of our Lenten journey**. To fulfill this important part of our preparation towards the celebration of Christ's Resurrection, we have an **opportunity and blessing to participate in a special philanthropic project**— Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine in New York. Out of the ashes and dust of tragedy springs hope and new life!

This is a **landmark project** for our Archdiocese, and one that we must see through to completion. Let us not forget that **we were the only ones who lost a house of worship in the attacks of September 11, 2001**. This Church will stand in remembrance of all those who perished in 9-11, and will be a place for prayer, comfort and peace. We also have the unique opportunity for this Shrine to be a beacon of our faith and to **show the world the beauty and fullness of Orthodoxy**.

How can you help? It's simple! **Make your donation of \$20 today online, or you may give your donation directly to your local Philoptochos Chapter, now through April 1st, and it will be forwarded to the Metropolis Philoptochos office**. We are asking every Philoptochos member in the Metropolis of San Francisco to participate in this \$20 challenge. **We can make an impact and be a part of history!**

Join us in supporting Saint Nicholas Church and National Shrine. New York and Port Authority Officials estimate **this will be the most visited Church in the United States**. This is truly a priceless opportunity for all of us, for our faith, for the Greek Orthodox Church.

The positive outcome of this effort will be presented to His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Geron of America at the National Philoptochos Board Meeting in just a few weeks. **We want to count you as one of those that accepts this \$20 challenge as part of your personal Lenten journey.**

Thank you for your continued love and support!

With Love in Christ,
Jeannie Ranglas, President
Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos

2019 Stewardship Pledge Cards Received List
as of March 21st, 2019

Allen, Becky
Amos, Kathy
Andros, Nick
Anton, John
Argyros, George & Stacey
Astmos, Spiro
Attalia, Phillip "Ted"
Ayanopolis, Terry
Barringer, Bill
Barringer, Louise Dobbs
Boukidis-Michas, Ann
Bozigian, Linda Jean
Breighner, Nancy
Canakis, Spiro & Eva
Carkonen, Paul & Paulette
Castrale, Craig & Eleni
Chiotis, Antony & Penny
Christopoulos, Dr. Jim & Gloria
Clark, Susan
Curreri, Jeffrey
Daglas, Alice
Dalkas, Anthony & Patricia
Davis, Matthew & Christine
Delegans, Chris
Demetropoulos, Nicholas
Desjoyners, Josie
Diamond, Michael & MariLou
Dixson, Richard & Ann
Dunkel, Mariya
Dymond, Donald & Alexandra
Elmo, Doris
Fakinos, Frank & Joan
Fick, Rod & Olympia Pilafidis
Gallade, Adele & Hoffman, Ken
Gannon, Robert & Sandy
Geotas, Despina
Grafas, Peter & Evelyn
Halkidic, Anastasios & Penelope
Haveles, John
Hawkins, Stephen & Melissa
Hector, Tim & Nadia
Heinrich, Bess
Kallis, Linda

Kaperonis, Nick
Karagianis, Lou & Penny
Karalis, Bill & Bessy
Karas, Demos & Evelyn
Kassotakis, Mary Ellen
Kolytiris, Constantine & Valerie
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
Lucas, Delphine & Steve Brown
Lyons, Doug & Carol
Makrianis, Julie
Maletis, Chris & Kristi
Mallen, Greg & Andi
Manesis, Dr. John & Bess
Mantes, E.G. & Mary Ann
McEvoy, Peter & Stephanie
Meek, Eve
Panopoulos, Chris & Joan
Pantels, Fr. Theodore & Pres. Petula
Petalas, John & Linda
Peterson, Jim & Teddie
Piggott, Bill & Mary
Pishue, Sam
Platis, Harry PLLC
Plumis, Diana
Poulos, Billie
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 & Lynann
Storton, Wynn & Ana
Tatomir, John & Mary
Tcharos, Emily
Valissarakos, Lula
Vawter, Mike & Debbie
Velculescu, Aurel & Victoria
Veroulis, Angelo & Tina
Vidalini, Beverly
Xitco, John & Kalista
Young, Diane
Zacharidou, Mary
Zambrano, Nelly
Zaverdas, Pam & Larry
Zhupa, Uranela