

SEPTEMBER 1, 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

THE ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR

THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR

As we begin the Ecclesiastical New Year, we see a society that has grown more and more unhappy and anxious. There seems to exist a disconnect between God and people, which is allowed by many non-Orthodox theologians today, who seem more focused on social issues than on spiritual life.

Yet, according to Holy Orthodox Tradition, Christians are to live the teachings of the Bible, which means that one is to "fight the good fight" against thoughts,

motives, attitudes and emotions that are in conflict with our Savior's life and teachings. This is a life - style of continuous *repentance*, taking full responsibility for one's personal relationship with God and others.

Modern Christians, including many Orthodox faithful, seem to lack an awareness of this kind of Christ-centered mentality as it has always been lived by the very Saints that we honor. So many Christians seem to be willing to justify sinful behaviors today

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THE ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR (THE INDICTION)

The Indiction begins on the 1st of September and is observed with special ceremony in the Church. Since the completion of each year takes place, as it were, with the harvest and gathering of the crops into storehouses, and we begin anew from henceforth the sowing of seed in the earth for the production of future crops, September is considered the beginning of the New Year. The Church also keeps festival this day, beseeching God for fair weather, seasonable rains, and an abundance of the fruits of the earth. The Holy Scriptures (Lev. 23:24-5 and Num. 29:1-2) also testify that the people of Israel celebrated the feast of the Blowing of the Trumpets on this day, offering hymns of thanksgiving. In addition to all the aforesaid, on this feast we also commemorate our Savior's entry into the synagogue in Nazareth, where He was given the book of the Prophet Isaiah to read, and He opened it and found the place where it is written, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, for which cause He hath anointed Me...*" (Luke 4:16-30).

It should be noted that to the present day, the Church has always celebrated the beginning of the New Year on September 1. This was the custom in Constantinople until its fall in 1453 and in Russia until the reign of Peter I. September 1 is still festively celebrated as the New Year at the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

--Taken from the Archdiocese website: www.goarch.org



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.

Καθώς μπαίνουμε σε ακόμη ένα Νέο Εκκλησιαστικό Έτος, παρατηρούμεν μιά κοινωνία που έχει γίνει όλο και πίο δυσαρηστημένη και ανήσυχη. Φαίνεται ότι υπάρχει μιά αποσύνδεση μεταξύ ανθρώπου και Θεού, κάτι που επιτρέπεται από πολλούς μη-Ορθόδοξους θεολόγους σήμερα, οι οποίοι φαίνονται πίο επικεντρωμένοι σε κοινωνικά ζητήματα παρά σε ζητήματα σχετικά με την πνευματική ζωή του ανθρώπου.

Ομως, σύμφωνα με την Αγία Παράδοση της Ορθόδοξου Εκκλησίας, ο Χριστιανός πρέπει να ζει σύμφωνα με τις διδασκαλίες της Αγίας Γραφής – κάτι που σημαίνει ότι θα κάνει τον <καλόν αγώνα> ενάντια στις σκέψεις, κίνητρα, στάσεις και συναισθήματα που έρχονται σε σύγκρουση με την ζωή και τις διδασκαλίες του Σωτήρος μας Χριστού. Πρόκειται για έναν τρόπον ζωής συνεχούς μετανοίας, αναλαμβάνοντας την πλήρη ευθύνη για την προσωπική σχέση του με τον Θεόν και με άλλους ανθρώπους.

Ως φαίνεται, οι σύγχρονοι Χριστιανοί – ακόμη και μερικοί Ορθόδοξοι – δεν έχουν αυτό το είδος ψυχοκεντρικής νοοτροπίας όπως είχαν οι Άγιοι της Εκκλησίας που τους τιμούμεν. Τόσο πολλοί σήμερα, ως φαίνεται, θέλουν να δικαιολογήσουν αμαρτίες εν ονόματι της <αγάπης> αντί να εμπνεύσουν με αγάπη όλους να εξετάσουν την συνείδησήν των για να αναζητήσουν την Σοφίαν του Θεού.

Με το Νέο Εκκλησιαστικό Έτος σήμερα, ας πηγάσουμε από μέσα μας την αγάπην Χριστού σε όλους γύρω μας. Ας είναι το Νέο Εκκλησιαστικό Έτος, έτος <έν Χριστῷ> αγάπης! +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

in the name of “love,” rather than to *lovingly* inspire one and other to examine our own consciences in order to seek the Wisdom of God. Along these lines, many people do not even believe that there are any sins -- just “disorders,” which require either professional treatment or civil punishment. This belief, however, opens the door to avoiding “punishment” by failing to confess the “major sins,” while justifying the “little sins” as “being normal.”

In contrast, in the mind of the Orthodox Church, every sin requires *repentance*, which involves a change in one’s whole worldview from the perspective of Christ’s presence in our lives, knowing that “little sins” often can add up to major assaults. While modern Christians would tend to dismiss the “little sin” of looking at a woman with lust, for example, Orthodox Saints would shed tears of sorrow for thoughts that would lead to disrespect for women and insult to Christ our God, by remembering that “*whoever looks with lust...has committed adultery in his heart.*”

As we continue to allow ourselves to water down Christianity and to let others mock it, we will continue to live in the world we live in - one that is fraught with anger, hate, violence and fear. Churches seem fullest in times of tragedy, when everyone is in “emergency mode.” Orthodox spiritual life, however, is one of *preempting* emergencies by following God’s Commandments every minute of every day, ready to correct those personal thoughts, feelings and attitudes that would sway one away from the contemplation of our Savior. Unable or unwilling to take up such a spiritual way of Orthodox Christian living, we instead turn to psychiatry and self-help manuals to soothe all of our pains, still with no relief.

As we begin the New Ecclesiastical Year, let us re-commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God with the intention of living out this commitment at all times and in all places. Thus, let us make this an “acceptable year” by emanating from within our souls the genuine love of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ for all people. This is what will make it truly an “acceptable year of the Lord.”

+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, soson imas."*

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

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

ANTIPHON II: *"Soson 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: *"Soson 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: *"Soson 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: *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 internal depths and the darkness below did raise the dead all the hosts of heaven's powers did pro-claim and cry out: O Life-Giving Christ our God, we give glory.)*

Hymn for the Ecclesiastical New Year: *O pasees dhimyourgohs....(O Fashioner of all creation, who made seasons and years by Your own authority, bless the crown of the year with Your goodness, O Lord, and preserve our rulers and Your city in peace, at the intercession of the Theotokos, and save us.)*

Hymn for the Theotokos: *Chereh ke Charitomeni Theotoke Parthene...(Rejoice, Maiden full of grace, O Virgin Theotokos; a haven and protection are you for all of mankind. From you did the Redeemer of the world become incarnate, only you are both a Mother and a Virgin. O Lady ever blessed and ever filled with glory, intercede with Christ God, beseeching Him to grant peace to the universe.)*

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 : *O ton eonon Pi-itees ke Despotis...(You, the Creator and the Lord of the ages, O God of all, truly transcending all essence, we earnestly entreat, that You will bless the year, and, O tender-loving Lord, in Your infinite mercy, only Master, save us all who worship and serve You, O our Redeemer, and who cry with fear, "For all Your servants, make fruitful the coming year.")*

Axion Estin *is chanted/sung*

Communion Hymn : *Enite ton Kyrion ek ton ouranon. Enite Afton en tis ipsistis. Allelouia. (Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Allelouia).*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour: Nicole and Eleni Castrale

PHILOPTOCHOS - Upcoming September meetings announcement-The **Philoptochos Board** will meet on Monday **September 9th at 11:30 AM** in the church hall. The **General Members meeting** will be held on Monday, **September 16th beginning at 11:30 AM** also in the church hall, starting with a light lunch for all attending. Meeting reminder emails or phone calls will be made a few days prior to the General Meeting. Correction from last Sunday's *Ladder*: Coffee Hour was sponsored by **Maria Rellos** (Rhonda & Pauline Latkovic sponsored coffee hour the week before last week.)

SUNDAY SCHOOL REGISTRATION - Sunday School classes return from summer break with the first Sunday of Sunday School being, **Sunday, September 22, 2019**. Registration forms are available by contacting Fr. Ted or Dr. Jim Christopoulos. Over the next few weeks, we want all parents to register their children for Sunday School.

STREET LIFE PROJECT - Meals were distributed to feed 200 homeless people **at Miles Park in Indio (August 27th) and Sunrise Park in Palm Springs (August 29th)**. We want to thank all the volunteers from our St. George parish who helped to make this outreach to the homeless community successful. Please see the September *Voice of St. George* for more details related to this month's work with the Street Life Project.

SEMI-ANNUAL DONATION STATEMENTS - On **Thursday, August 29th and Friday, August 30th**, our parish office mailed out the semi-annual donation statements (stewardship). We are grateful to God for everyone's support for our St. George parish.

MEMORIAL WALL NAMEPLATE ANNOUNCEMENT --The outstanding nameplate orders for the first phase of the Memorial Wall that were ordered back in May & June are in or near being finished by the manufacturer. We expect to receive them by September 10th and will install them immediately. As we enter the second phase of the memorial wall project, please note that the price of a nameplate is now \$225.00 (up to 25-28 letters) due to the increase in our cost to have them manufactured and sent.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, September 2nd.....Labor Day (office closed)

Tuesday, September 3rd.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, September 4th.....AHEPA Meeting - 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, September 5th.....Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.

EPISTLE—1 Timothy 2: 1-7

Timothy, my son, first of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

GOSPEL— Luke 4:16-22

At that time, Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the Sabbath day. And he stood up to read; and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke well of him, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.